

Submitted to Fairbanks Daily News Miner

March 30, 2002

To the editors:

Regarding your editorial of Saturday March 30: Your unhelpful role in getting good information to Fairbanks about this proposal to tax wholesale fuel shipments from the borough. For instance you ask:

Why should one industry be singled out to shoulder such a large part of the local property taxes?

What? This is not a property tax, first, and second, don't we single out property owners for taxes now? Who else is paying any taxes locally? Yes there is a bed tax, but isn't this precisely taxing one industry, tourism, and singling them out? I don't see you screaming a defense for the tourism industry against unfair taxation. Your position is nakedly pro-corporate, and flagrantly anti-public interest. Williams uses Alaskan royalty crude oil to produce everything here. It is OUR oil! They profit from it now without any local taxation save property taxes. If it is so unfair, how about allowing another refinery to compete for our royalty oil? We've adequately provided for Williams. How about ourselves? Also, 80-85 percent of our state revenue is from taxing one industry, the petroleum industry. Now suddenly this is deemed unfair by you? How odd.

You say you can't get an opinion on the legal issues. What is your job anyway? Ever heard of the state attorney general? And you might even suggest changing a law which prevents a sensible taxing alternative, since the law obviously serves the industry now, not the citizens, and seems so difficult to interpret.

And your coup-de-grace." ... This bucks the national trend of giving a tax break to business. "Can you be any more goveling in your bootlicking of the corporate overlords? Wow. Like they are going to pack up and leave their most profitable operation and its monopoly on Alaskan fuels? Can any thinking person really believe this? You are one sad excuse for a fiery, public interest, probing newspaper.

Pathetically sad,

Rich Seifert